

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 02219 261224Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 OPIC-03 TRSE-00  
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /042 W  
-----025921 261959Z /66  
R 261110Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8164  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 2219

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: BTIO, MR  
SUBJECT: USG STANCE ON AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN MAURITANIA:  
A BEARISH VIEW FROM THE FIELD

REF: STATE 228332

1. DESPITE PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENCE AND OPTIMISM OF MAURITANIAN  
AMBASSADOR TO U.S. ABOUT ROSY PROSPECTS FOR AMERICAN INVESTMENT  
IN MAURITANIA (REFTEL), U.S. DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN NOUAKCHOTT  
STILL FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT "AMERICAN COMPANIES SHOULD BE URGED  
TO SELL TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE (TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL)  
FOR HARD CASH UNDER PRECISE AND DETAILED CONTRACTS. FOR NEXT  
SEVERAL YEARS, AMERICAN FIRMS WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO  
AVOID DIRECT INVESTMENT, CONTRIBUTING INSTEAD PROCESS TECH-  
NOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE WHILE MAURITANIAN PARTNERS  
PROVIDE INVESTMENT, WORKING CAPITAL, AND POLITICAL KNOW-HOW"  
(1976 PARA PAPER, P. 10 AND FOLLOWING). "IMPEDIMENTS TO U.S.  
INVESTMENT POSED BY AN INEXPERIENCED AND LETHARGIC GIRM  
BUREAUCRACY AND A MINISCULE, UNINFORMED, AND UNSOPHISTICATED  
PRIVATE BUSINESS COMMUNITY REMAIN."

2. TWO U.S. FIRMS OPERATING IN MAURITANIA HAVE SUSTAINED SUB-  
STANTIAL LOSSES DUE IN EQUAL MEASURE TO VERY DIFFICULT  
INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH ALL PRIVATE FIRMS --  
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MAURITANIAN AND FOREIGN -- OPERATE, AND TO THEIR OWN NAIVETE,  
INEPTNESS, AND MARKED INABILITY TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY IN AN  
EXTREME OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT.  
(HUGHES AIRWEST HAD LOST NEARLY QUARTER OF MILLION BEFORE IT  
RENEGOTIATED ITS SERVICE CONTRACT; LANG/Pritchard IS CURRENTLY  
380-400,000 DOLLARS IN HOLE ON FIXED-PRICE STRAIGHT CONSTRUCTION  
DEAL.) HAD THESE TWO COMPANIES HAD ANY OF THEIR OWN MONEY

IN THESE PROJECTS, THEY WOULD REALLY HAVE LOST THEIR SHIRTS.

HANDYSIDE

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** BTIO, MR  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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